

TEACHER-SPECIALIST COLLABORATION

Activity overview:

In this practice activity, you will read the information a classroom teacher and program specialist are preparing to discuss. Then, with a partner, you will role play how the teacher and specialist might discuss the assessment data and work collaboratively to plan the “next steps” to support the child’s progress.

Directions:

1. Review the following assessment information.



When Maya’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) was developed, her family members and classroom staff agreed that it was important for Maya to progress from making requests with only gestures and sounds. Maya is able to imitate words and verbally name items, but she does not use these basic verbal skills at home or in school. Maya’s IEP includes the goal of using single words to request items and activities.

Maya’s teacher is collecting weekly assessment information about this goal during meal times and play. When Maya wants her snack, she reaches toward the serving bowl and says, “Uh, uh” until someone gives her food. During indoor play, Maya also reaches and vocalizes until a staff member gets the box with her favorite building toy down from a high shelf. Maya’s favorite outdoor play activity is being pushed on a swing. When the swing stops, Maya vocalizes and wiggles her legs until she gets another push. Family members have shared with the teacher that Maya uses sounds and gestures at home instead of single words to request food, objects, and activities.

2. With a partner, practice how to understand the assessment information and jointly plan for the child's next learning step(s). One person plays the role of teacher and one plays the role of specialist. For this activity, assume that the teacher and specialist have an established relationship with defined roles and responsibilities to support Maya's development. When finished, discuss your reactions to this experience.

- **Teacher role:** Talk with a specialist (an early childhood special educator or speech/language therapist) to reach an understanding of Maya's assessment information. Plan "next steps" together to help Maya progress in her use of verbal language to request items and activities. As part of the collaborative problem-solving process, explain to the specialist which strategies might be the easiest to use often in your classroom.
- **Specialist role:** Talk with the teacher to collaboratively consider which next learning steps will help Maya progress and function more effectively in the classroom. Brainstorm and choose strategies to help Maya progress in her use of words to request items and activities.

